- 10. (AMENDED) A method of selecting a molecule of interest, which is capable of binding to a target ligand, wherein the interaction between the molecule of interest and the target ligand is detected with a signal amplification system comprising:
- (a) a first chimeric polypeptide comprising a first fragment of an enzyme chosen from adenylate cyclase and guanylate cyclase;
- (b) a second chimeric polypeptide comprising a second fragment of an enzyme chosen from adenylate cyclase and guanylate cyclase, or a modulating substance capable of activating adenylate cyclase or guanylate cyclase, and
 - (c) a signal molecule precursor,

wherein the first fragment is fused to a molecule of interest, and the second fragment or the modulating substance is fused to a target ligand, and wherein the activity of the enzyme is restored by the *in vivo* interaction between the molecule of interest and the target ligand and wherein a signal amplification is generated by the restored enzyme activity; and

wherein the in vivo interaction occurs in a bacterial cell.

- 11. (AMENDED) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 10, wherein the signal amplification corresponds to production of a signal molecule.
- 12. (AMENDED) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 10, wherein the signal amplification triggers transcriptional activation.
- 13. (AMENDED) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 10, wherein the signal amplification system comprises a bacterial multi-hybrid system of at least two distinct fragments of an enzyme.

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- 14. (AMENDED) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 10, wherein the signal amplification system comprises a bacterial multi-hybrid system of at least a first fragment of an enzyme and a modulating substance.
- 15. (AMENDED) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 10, wherein the target ligand is selected from proteins, peptides, polypeptides, receptors, ligands, antigens, antibodies, DNA binding proteins, glycoproteins, lipoproteins, and recombinant proteins.
- 16. (AMENDED) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 15, wherein the molecule of interest is capable of interacting with the target ligand.
- 17. (AMENDED) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 11, wherein the interaction between the molecule of interest and the target ligand is quantified by measuring synthesis of the signal molecule.
- 18. (AMENDED) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 11, wherein the signal molecule comprises cAMP.
- 19. (AMENDED) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 11, wherein the signal molecule comprises cGMP.
- 20. (AMENDED) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 46, wherein the reporter gene is selected from genes coding for a nutritional marker, genes conferring resistance to antibiotics, genes encoding a toxin, genes encoding a color marker, genes encoding a phase receptor protein or fragment thereof, and any other gene giving a selectable phenotype.
- 21. (AMENDED) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 10, wherein the molecule of interest is a mutant molecule compared to a known

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wild type molecule and said molecule of interest is tested for its capacity to interact with the target ligand.

- 22. (AMENDED) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 10, wherein the selection is performed in an *E. coli* strain or in any bacterial strain deficient in endogenous adenylate cyclase or guanylate cyclase.
- 25. (AMENDED) A method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest, wherein the stimulating or the inhibiting is detected with a signal amplification system comprising:
- (a) a first chimeric polypeptide comprising a first fragment of an enzyme chosen from adenylate cyclase and guanylate cyclase;
- (b) a second chimeric polypeptide comprising a second fragment of an enzyme chosen from adenylate cyclase and guanylate cyclase, or a modulating substance capable of activating adenylate cyclase or guanylate cyclase, and
 - (c) a signal molecule precursor.

wherein the first fragment is fused to a molecule of interest, and the second fragment or the modulating substance is fused to a target ligand, and wherein the activity of the enzyme is restored by the *in vivo* interaction between the molecule of interest and the target ligand and wherein a signal amplification is generated by the restored enzyme activity; and

wherein the *in vivo* interaction occurs in a bacterial cell, and wherein the activity of the enzyme is tested in the presence and absence of the test substance.

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- 26. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 25, wherein the signal amplification system comprises a bacterial multi-hybrid system of at least two distinct fragments of an enzyme.
- 27. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 25, wherein the signal amplification system comprises a bacterial multi-hybrid system of at least a first fragment of an enzyme and a modulating substance.
- 28. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 25, wherein the signal amplification corresponds to production of a signal molecule.
- 29. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 28, wherein the signal amplification corresponding to the production of a signaling molecule is blocked or partially abolished.
- 30. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 25, wherein the signal amplification generated by the restored enzyme activity leads to transcriptional activation, which leads to reporter gene expression.

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- 31. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 30, wherein the transcriptional activation leading to reporter gene expression is blocked or partially abolished.
- 32. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 25, wherein the target ligand is selected from receptors, ligands, antigens, antibodies, DNA binding proteins, glycoproteins and lipoproteins.
- 33. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 25, wherein the test substance is selected from proteins, glycoproteins, lipoproteins, ligands, and any other compound having stimulating or inhibitory affinity.
- 34. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 28, wherein the signal molecule corresponds to cAMP.
- 35. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 28, wherein the signal molecule corresponds to cGMP.
- 36. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 30, wherein the reporter gene is selected from genes coding for a nutritional marker, genes conferring resistance to antibiotics, genes encoding toxin,

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genes encoding a color marker, genes encoding phage receptor proteins or a fragment thereof, and any other gene giving a selectable phenotype.

- 37. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 25, wherein the molecule of interest is a mutant molecule compared to a known wild type molecule and said molecule of interest is tested for its capacity of interacting with the target ligand.
- 38. (AMENDED) The method of screening for a test substance capable of stimulating or inhibiting the interaction between a target ligand and a molecule of interest according to claim 25, wherein the screening is performed in an *E. coli* strain or in any bacterial strain deficient in endogenous adenylate cyclase or guanylate cyclase.
 - 46. (NEW) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 12, wherein the transcriptional activation leads to expression of a reporter gene.
 - 47. (NEW) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 46, wherein the interaction between the molecule of interest and the target ligand is quantified by measuring the expression of the reporter gene.
 - 48. (NEW) The method of selecting a molecule of interest according to claim 15, wherein the molecule of interest is capable of interacting with the target ligand and of binding to the target ligand.

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